THE NECESSITY OF A Present Repentance, IN A SERMON

PREACH'D

Before the RIGHT HONOURABLE the LORD MAYOR, and COURT of ALDERMEN at *GUILD-HALL* Chapel, *March* 10th. 169⅘.

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PROV. Chap. xxvij. Verſe 1.

Boaſt not thy ſelf of to Morrow; for thou knoweſt not what a Day may bring forth.

THE Wiſe Man in this Religious Check, at the ſame time rebukes and cautions thoſe Slothful Triflers, whom he ſaw ſhuffling off the moſt neceſſary Buſineſs of their Lives, what they themſelves acknowledg'd muſt needs be done; but yet vainly flatter'd their own Hearts, that they might enjoy this Day's Paſtime, and be early enough for that Work *to Morrow*: And certainly, it may moſt properly be apply'd now to the Caſe of every Chriſtian, fondly deferring his *Repentance*, that moſt neceſſary Work, upon which Salvation it ſelf depends: It is not the Doctrine of *Repentance*, Men ſcruple to acknowledge; no, the Scriptures are too plain, and peremptory in this Particular (*Except ye repent, ye ſhall all periſh*) for ſuch as embrace them, to out-face the *Neceſſity of Repentance*: But the Point, wherein they are unſettled, is about the Time; tho' they muſt *Repent*, yet this

this Day's Temptation flatters them, to Morrow will be time enough; and then to Morrow's Luſt adviſes, a Week hence will not be too late: Thus, if Youth determines the Caſe, its warm and heated Blood, coneludes the Duties of *Repentance*, namely, a Serious Conſtancy in our Devotions; the Works of Mortifications and Self-denials to be moſt ſuitable to the Sedateneſs and Gravity of Age: If we conſult thoſe in the Strength of their Years, their Plea immediately is this, That they are now in the Prime of their Days, in that part of their Life, which is moſt proper for the concerns of this World; in the very Critical Moment, for advancing their preſent Honours, or Eſtabliſhing the Happineſs of their Poſterity: That they feel themſelves Strong, and Healthy, paſt thoſe Dangers which encompaſs Youth, far enough from Death, and the Grave, and therefore under no ſuch preſſing Obligations to be haſtening their *Repentance*, which will be more becoming our declining State: Nay, if old Age it ſelf be Umpire, it preſently reſolves, That it is more ſeaſonable ſtill to cheriſh, than to check the periſhing Heat, and even with one Foot in the Grave, deems its moſt important Buſineſs which remaineth in this World, is to be ſtill Careful in Supporting Life: even

even then, when Men have gone on ſo long, they think it too early ſtill to look back, and becauſe they find themſelves greatly diſabled for Sinning, they are apt to imagine, that they are as greatly diſengaged from *Repenting*: Thus from the Cradle to the Grave, from the very Beginning to the End of Life, we are all ſhifting and putting off the moſt neceſſary Buſineſs of our Lives: Thus, though in all Degrees of our Age, as Chriſtians, we acknowledge it neceſſary to *Repent*; yet, in no degree of our Life, to which we are arrived, as Men, do we judge it time to begin *Repentance*. Give me Leave therefore, in Conformity to this holy Seaſon, and upon the very Importance of the Subject it ſelf, here to take up the wiſe Man's Admonition, and with the moſt religious Application, preſs upon you the abſolute Neceſſity of our preſent performing this great Work; ſhew you how very unreaſonable it muſt be in us Chriſtians, who acknowledge *Repentance* to be a Work ſo indiſpenſible towards our Salvation, that if it be not done before Death, we muſt die for ever, to depend upon to Morrow to do it in, when we know not, in what Circumſtances this very Day may leave us: Now, this I ſhall endeavour in theſe Three Particulars:

Firſt,

First, By ſhewing you the dangerous Uncertainties, which all delaying Men have to depend upon.

Secondly, How improper the Times reſolv'd on by ſuch Men to *Repent* in, will be for the Work of their *Repentance*.

Thirdly, I ſhall make it appear, That there is no Excuſe or Pretence whatſoever which Men may now urge, in favour of their Delays; but what, if ſeriouſly conſidered, muſt, even in Wiſdom, oblige them to haſten their *Repentance*.

I. As to the dangerous Uncertainties, which all delaying Men have to depend upon.

Can any Thing be more dangerous and uncertain in the Buſineſs of our Salvation, than that which has no Certainty in the Goſpel of Chriſt? Now, though 'tis true, its Heavenly Voice is this, *Repent and live*; yet, we may obſerve, it ſtill directs us to the time preſent: As for a future *Repentance*, there is no ſuch thing hinted at in Scripture. God no-where calls upon us to *Repent* to Morrow, or aſſures us, That our next Year's Penitence ſhall be ſufficient for this Year's Tranſgreſſions: No, all the Promiſes of his Help, and

and of the Aſſiſtances of his holy Spirit for this Purpoſe, are given to ſuch as ſeek him early, to ſuch as call upon him whilſt he is near. Now, God is ſaid to be near us, when our Sins have not ſet us far from him: That is, when by our long and habitual Impenitence, we have not chaſed his bleſſed Spirit far from his Temple, which is our Body. If we addreſs, before the vitious Diſtemper grows inveterate, we may find Life and Conſolation in the comfortable Refreſhments of God's Holy Spirit; but if we deferr and ſuffer him whilſt he is near, to forſake us, without working up our Souls for this Heavenly Undertaking, can we imagine, we ſhall be able to perform it, at God's greater diſtance from us? I am ſure we have no Authority from God to preſume we ſhall: No, Thoſe Men who are ſo willing to flatter themſelves in the Perſwaſion, that they may go on ſometime ſecurely in their Sins, that they ſhall certainly return at laſt, and ſeek after God, wou'd do very well to conſider, that they are without any Promiſe in the Scriptures, either that they ſhall have Grace enough to return at laſt, or if they ſhould ſeek him, that he will then be found by them; nay, there is not one inſtance throughout the whole Goſpel, that a late *Repentance*, ſhall be

available in ſuch Men, who now knowingly and wilfully deferr *Repenting*: I ſay, who knowingly, and wilfully deferr, upon theſe two Accounts, 1. Becauſe I take this to be the caſe of all us here preſent; who, I truſt have long ſince been baptized into the Faith of Chriſt, and the Eſſential part of our Baptiſmal Covenant with God, is a preſent *Repentance*. 2. I ſay knowingly, becauſe this plainly ſets before us, the manifeſt difference between our caſe now, and that of the Thief upon the Croſs heretofore; which is the only inſtance that looks this way; and that ſuch a one, through the miſ-underſtanding of which, too many Men, I fear, do deprive their own Souls of this bleſſed Means of Salvation: To ſet your Underſtandings right as to that particular, you may obſerve, That though in reſpect of this Life, the Thief's *Repentance* was as late, as it is poſſible, that of the moſt loytering of us all can be, even as late as Death it ſelf; yet in reſpect of the time when he came to the Knowledge of God, it was very early; even as early as Faith began; he no ſooner beheld the Glory of Chriſt's Majeſty, but he humbled himſelf under the ſenſe of his own vileneſs; ſo ſoon as he knew God, he renounced the World, and in a Penitential Confeſſion,

ſeſſion, humbly beſought Chriſt's merciful Remembrance in his Kingdom: Now, if we reflect upon theſe Circumſtances, what can we diſcover in them which any ways relates to our own Caſe, who have long enjoyed the Knowledge of God's Truths, and yet long lived in an habitual Neglect of all the preſent Opportunities of Salvation; wilfully confiding in the imaginary Hopes, in the vain Uncertainties, of a future *Repentance*: I ſay, the vain Uncertainties of a future *Repentance*; for that there is nothing, but Vanity, Danger, and Uncertainty in a future *Repentance*, from the very firſt, to the laſt Circumſtances of it; I ſhall farther make appear in theſe following Conſiderations.

Firſt, What certainty can there be in that, which depends upon ſo uncertain a Foundation as the Life of Man? or rather let the *Quære* go thus; With what Wiſdom ſhall any Man depend upon the certainty of that which is not now, and which, that it ever be, muſt depend upon the certainty of our time to come in this World, which may never be: who, as we are not able to add one Cubit to our Stature, to make one Hair black, or white; ſo, much leſs can we preſume, that the certainty of Life is in our Power? If thou wilt repoſe the certainty of thy

Life in a *Repentance* hereafter, muſt it not then become thee, to enſure an Hereafter for thy ſelf to *Repent* in? If this be beyond thy reach, then conſider thou haſt ſhuffled off thy Salvation to that which is beyond thy Power, thou haſt only purpos'd to *Repent* then, when, for ought thou knoweſt, thou ſhalt be no more. I ſee but one thing, with which impenitent Men may ſatisfie their Conſciences againſt the force of this Reaſoning; and it is this: A Perſwaſion that God is a Being eſſentially too kind, and gracious, to take Men out of this World, before they have *Repented*, that is, whilſt they are unfit to Die; but is not this alſo vain, and an uncertainty, inconſiſtent with the moſt certain Doctrines of God's Holy Spirit, which frequently acquaint us that the Wicked, namely, ſuch as the *Deceitful and Blood-thirſty Men, ſhall not live out half their days?* And to argue this upon the common Principles of Reaſon, Can we in reaſon believe, that there can lie any Obligation upon God to prolong our lives, when it is our contemptuous Neglect of God's Grace, our daily Violations of God's righteous Judgments, which now renders us unfit for Death? Can any Man hope thus to put off Death, by his Rebellions againſt *the Lord of Life?*

2. As

2. As Life is uncertain, ſo is the continuance of God's Grace uncertain alſo; nay, according to what our Lord hath taught us in the Parable of the Talents, 'tis almoſt certain, That, if we neglect or miſuſe it now, it ſhall not be continued to us; for there our Saviour plainly tells us, *From him that hath not, ſhall be taken away even that which he hath*; that is, that Man that ſhall not apply in the bleſſed Works of Holineſs, and good Living, the Portion of God's Grace this Day tendered to him, to Morrow he ſhall be left Graceleſs: And then what certainty can there be of our *Repentance*, where there can be no certainty of the Grace of God, without which, 'tis impoſſible we ſhou'd *Repent* at all, *Repentance* being the kindly Operation of his heavenly Grace, which ſoftens the Heart, and melts all our frowardneſs into contrition?

II. And thus I paſs to the Second Thing propounded, and that is to ſhew how improper the times reſolv'd on by delaying Men to *Repent* in, will be for the Works of their *Repentance*:

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We muſt either all reſolve upon a preſent *Repentance*; (and oh! that any thing I now ſpeak may be able to effect ſuch a bleſſed Reſolution in us all) or elſe we muſt fix upon ſuch Seaſons as theſe to *Repent* in: That is to ſay, either the time of Sickneſs, the time of Old-Age, or the time of Death. I ſhall therefore diſtinctly examine each of theſe, and particularly ſhew, how very improper any one of them will be for the Performance of our *Repentance.*

1. Then; As for the time of Sickneſs, can this be a proper time to begin *Repentance*, when one of the moſt comfortable Effects of a ſincere *Repentance*, indeed, the only Comfort it can afford us in this Life, is to refreſh and ſweeten our Conſciences upon our Bed of Sickneſs? Can Sickneſs be the proper Seaſon for *Repentance*, which requires a calm and ſedate Soul, a free and apprehenſive Underſtanding, that may either occaſion ſuch heats as will diſtract, ſuch Fumes as may oppreſs, or thoſe affrighting Apprehenſions, which may both confound our Senſes and terrify the moſt judicious Faculties of our Souls? Shall we then be beſt fitted to make our Peace with God, when we may be all Agony and Diſtraction? when all the Faculties of our Souls and Bodies are in Confuſion

Confuſion and Diſorder? Let us but reflect with our ſelves, how every little Indiſpoſition of Body indiſpoſes our Souls; alſo, how often we have excuſed to our own Conſciences (if we have lived with any Conſcience of doing our Duty to God) the Omiſſion of our Prayers and other religious Exerciſes, upon this very Plea of the Illneſs of our Bodies; and if theſe ordinary Interruptions of our Health do ſo far affect our Souls, as to divert us from the bleſſed Works of Faith and Holineſs, can we imagine, That a Sickneſs even unto Death, whoſe Malignity lays hold on all our Powers, whoſe Rage or Stupefaction ſtops or employs all the Faculties within us, ſhall prepare or diſpoſe our Hearts with more than ordinary Inclinations for the Works of Righteouſneſs? Certainly we muſt all think *Repentance* an eaſy Task indeed, if we can judge our ſelves ſtrong enough for that, when we ſhall be diſabled for every thing beſides. Whether we ſhall have a time to be ſick in, I mean, ſuch a Space of time as may be proportionable to the Occaſions of our Tranſgreſſions, is ſuch an Uncertainty which no mortal Man can aſſure himſelf of: But put the Caſe we might preſume upon a fit of Sickneſs (which I muſt confeſs

confeſs to be the very Subject of the Argument I am ſpeaking to,) yet after all, methinks it muſt be a moſt unaccountable Piece of Diſcretion in any Man, to cheriſh one mortal Diſeaſe; nay, ſuch a Foulneſs in the Soul as is Impenitence, which tendeth to Death and everlaſting Deſtruction: To deferr I ſay, and put off its timely Cure till another fatal Diſtemper ſhall ſeize, and ſo the more deſperately endanger him: Were there no other Conſiderations to convince us in this Partilar, yet in this one, we may diſcover how improper Sickneſs muſt be, to be fix'd upon for the Performance of our *Repentance*; namely, becauſe no Man can be certain what Operations Sickneſs may effect in him, whether its Anguiſh may not harden, or its Gentleneſs prevent his holy Reſolutions to *Repent.* We have daily Inſtances of ſuch Diſtempers, which deprive Men of their Hopes and Wits together, and of others too, whoſe indiſcernable Decays too often lull them in Impenitence. And now can Sickneſs be a proper Seaſon for *Repentance*, which contains our Sorrows for our paſt Irregularities, which is our actual returning into the Paths of Health and Wiſdom, when Sickneſs, many times, puts

puts us but ſtill more beſides our ſelves? Can that be the proper time to qualifie our Griefs for Sin, which has ſo many Uneaſineſſes, and Diſtractions of its own?

And thus I paſs to the Second time, in which many purpoſe to *Repent*, and that is the time of old Age: Where I ſhall not ſtand now to conſider the improbability, whether One in Five hundred of thoſe who fix upon this time, ever live to be old; nor yet that Obſervation which daily Experience ſeems but too conſtantly to inſtruct us in; namely, That a vicious, and impenitent Youth, too frequently concludes in a hardened, and an unrelenting old Age; but I ſhall now ſuppoſe, That by the good Providence of God, we may all here live to be old; and ſo reaſon upon this Suppoſition. Now then, Shall old Age be proper for this Work? What? Shall that be maſtered with feeble Joints, and trembling Knees, which has ſo long been victorious over all our ſtrongeſt Reſolutions? Shall the Dregs, and refuſe of Life, be the propereſt Sacrifice for our God? Shall we then be beſt qualified to ſet forth the Greatneſs

of his Mercies, when all thoſe excellent Endowments, which God has bleſs'd us with, on purpoſe that we might glorifie his Heavenly Majeſty, have been conſumed on Sin, and are worn out in the Works of Unrighteouſneſs? Shall that be our fit time, for the Fear of God which is the beginning of Wiſdom, when we are reduced to the Weakneſs of Childhood? Can that be the fitteſt Seaſon for us to take the Review of our Lives paſt, when we have loſt our Memories? that a time to look back, when we ſhall ſcarce be able to ſee before us? In a word, Shall that be a fit time, for a free, voluntary, and conſcientious forſaking of Sin (wherein true *Repentance* does conſiſt) when Sin it ſelf will forſake us? 'Tis wonderful to obſerve, how Men act contrary to thoſe received Principles of Wiſdom which directs them in other Matters, in this greater Buſineſs of their Salvation; if we examine them as to their Concerns relating to this World, this Excuſe they make for their preſent Cares, Cravings, and immoderate purſuit after the Things of this World; is this, To keep,

and

and refreſh them when they ſhall be unfit for Cares, to make old Age happy, and eaſie. How inſatiable are they in ſecuring the greateſt Stores againſt that time, when the leaſt may ſatisfie? But as for thoſe Heavenly Treaſures which will be the more needful the nigher we approach the Grave, they think it time enough to be ſeeking theſe, when they ſhou'd actually enjoy them. They think there is no Neceſſity to be careful for theſe which are moſt neceſſary, till by the inveterate habits of their Vices, they are indeed rendered unfit for all the watchful Cares of true Devotion: What a Contradiction is here? That Men ſhou'd pretend they wou'd have their old Age happy, and yet load it with all the Pains, and bitter Labours of *Repentance*? Can old Age thus be happy, when all this may be too little; when we may cry and not be heard, when we may weep, and languiſh, and *Repent*, and yet, like *Eſau*, find none to Comfort, none to reſtore the Bleſſing? When that God, whom now in the Beauties of our Youth, and Perfection of our Age, we have con-

temned, ſhall in his Wiſdom and Juſtice contemn our crazineſs? Wou'd'ſt thou be happy when thou art old? thou muſt then needs be Godly now thou art young: That which often diſturbed the Soul of *David*, was the ſence of his Sins; tho' he lived in an habitual *Repentance*, yet we find this frequently wounded him in the midſt of his Enjoyments. Let me, therefore, earneſtly beſeech ye that are young, or in the Strength of your Years, to Remember your Creator now in theſe Days of Youth and Strength: And that, as for many others, ſo eſpecially upon theſe two Conſiderations: *Firſt*, Becauſe, If ye will not Serve God now, whilſt ye are fit for the Services of the World, ye can expect no Bleſſings from God then, when ye ſhall be paſt Tranſgreſſings. *Secondly*, Becauſe, If ye will not Serve God now, ye will not be Able to Serve him hereafter, there being no Service at all, in that, it will be the effect of Impotency, and Neceſſity; it being no Service at all to God, that thou wilt abſtain from Sinning, when the vicious humour has been fulfilled before, and thy Natural Decays render

render thee unfit for Sinning. Conſider 'tis now, in theſe Days of Youth and Strength, that Temptations flow about thee; 'Tis now, that Ambition pricks, and the World beſets thee with Enchantments; 'Tis now, that the unrulineſs of thy Blood, and the evil propenſities of thy Fleſh, prompt thee to Rebellion againſt thy God; and therefore it muſt be now that is the propereſt Seaſon for all the holy Actions of true Devotion: If thou caſt off the care of thy Soul now, think not that God will take it up; think not that He will accept thy refuſe, much leſs, in Wiſdom, or Religion can'ſt thou imagine, that notwithſtanding thy preſent contempt of ſo precious a Treaſure, he will at laſt Exalt and Glorifie thee. Old Age, ſhou'd God bleſs us with it, will be the beginning of our Harveſt; the time when we ſhall in ſome Meaſure, reap the bleſs'd Fruits of a preſent Piety, and *Repentance*; and therefore very improper to be appointed by us for the time of Seed, *i. e.* for the time of beginning of our *Repenting*.

And

And thus I am brought to ſpeak to the third Time reſolved on by too many Men, for the Work of their *Repentance*; which, though it be a Time which all muſt come to, yet certainly, a later Hour they cannot think on, for 'tis the Hour of Death. Now is not this a monſtrous Reſolution? I will begin then to live righteouſly, when I may conclude with my ſelf I ſhall live no longer: I will there fix the Aſſurance of my Eternal Happineſs, where I am taught, will end all the Opportunities of making ſure my future Happineſs. Wilt thou, ſay'ſt thou, *Repent* at Death? Wilt thou indeed, truſt all to one Moment? then give me Leave to repreſent unto thee, how deſperately the State of thy Salvation ſtandeth; thou wilt *Repent*.

Alas! It will not be in thy Power to *Repent* at Pleaſure; 'tis neither he that willeth, nor that Man that now reſolveth, but of the Grace of God that we *Repent* at all: And will it not be juſt in God, whom thou haſt ſo contentedly forgot thy whole Life, either to forget thee at thy Death, or by withdrawing his Grace, leave thee to be forgotten by thy ſelf? Again,

Why

Why wilt thou deferr till Death? Doſt thou think the time of this Life, which is given us on purpoſe that herein we may make our Calling and Election ſure, too early for us to be working out of our Salvation? Will not Conſolations be more ſeaſonable in the Hour of Death, than Sorrows and Remorſe? Will it not be more comfortable to reflect on a ſincere *Repentance* paſt, than to depend upon ſuch a ſudden *Repentance*, which may either not come, or if it do, have no Sincerity at all in it; none I am ſure, which any wicked Man that hath not before, either actually ſet upon a good, or reflected upon an evil Courſe, can poſſibly be aſſured of? And my Reaſon is, becauſe our *Repentance* may be as ſick and weakly as our Bodies; we may eaſily miſtake the Wearineſs of our Limbs, for the Uneaſineſs of our Souls; our preſent Impotency and want of Strength to Sin, for a real Averſion to Sin; nay, for the very Reformation of our ſinful Inclinations; therefore, I ſhall conclude this Particular with the Opinion of St. *Auguſtine*, who being ask'd his Thoughts of thoſe who did then what too many now do,

deferr

deferr their *Repentance* to the laſt Moment, anſwers his Friend who put the Queſtion to him, in theſe Words, *I avouch not that he can be ſaved, nor poſitively that he ſhall be condemned; but if thou wouldſt be ſaved, O Friend! let me adviſe thee, be thou ſure to* Repent *now thou art well.*

III. And thus I come to the laſt General Head of my Diſcourſe, to ſhew how every Pretence or Excuſe which Men may now make, in Favour of their Delays, muſt, if ſeriouſly conſidered, even in Wiſdom, oblige them to haſten their *Repentance.*

One of the Excnſes, with which ſome Men countenance their Delays, is this, That upon the Examination of their own Ways, they find their Sins are yet but ſmall, and ſuch as they may eaſily caſt off at Pleaſure: But give me Leave to reaſon againſt theſe Deluders of their own Souls. Are thy Sins ſmall? Then why wilt thou deferr, ſince the Work of thy *Repentance* will be the lighter? May they eaſily be caſt off? Then why wilt not thou immediately part with them, ſince the leaſt Grain is infectious, and every wilful Detainment tendeth unto Death?

Again,

Again, conſider, though they may be light now, yet the ſhorteſt Continuance will make them heavier; their Guilt increaſes every Moment, and the longer they poſſeſs thy Soul, the more violently will they keep Poſſeſſion. Another Excuſe is, the contrary to this, namely, the Greatneſs of our Sins, and the mighty Difficulties in Repentance: But may we not conſider here, That though the Work be great and difficult indeed, yet ſtill 'tis neceſſary; and again, That the longer we deferr, the more difficult we ſhall find the Task: For, does the Burden of thy Sins feel heavy to Day, and canſt thou think to Morrow's Weight will make it lighter? Is it not in this very Caſe of our Tranſgreſſions, that we may apply that of the Holy Spirit, *ſufficient to the Day is the Evil thereof*; and then, muſt not every Day add to thy Tale, and ſo the Portion of thy *Repentance* increaſe daily? But further, if it be really ſo hard and difficult to ſubdue them now, whilſt thou art in full Strength and Vigour; and as thou may'ſt fanſie, haſt length of Days before thee, canſt thou imagine, that they will

the eaſilier be removed under the Faintings of Sickneſs, Decays, and Impotencies of Age, or the ſurprizing Pangs of Death? Doſt thou now fear their Greatneſs, and wilt thou not, by thy *Repentance*, endeavour to prevent their growing greater; or canſt thou believe, that whilſt thou ſinneſt on, thy Account will the eaſier be made up at laſt? Is not ſuch a Concluſion as this, much more rational; that Work which is ſo hard and difficult to Day, may, if we do not immediately ſet about it, indeed grow invincible to Morrow? Another Pretence ſtill, with which Men ſeem to ſatisfie themſelves under their Delays, is, The neceſſary Imployments of Life, the indiſpenſible Occaſions of this World: Theſe, ſay they, often divert us from the Work of Holineſs; theſe are thoſe things which ever interrupt us in our Attempts this Way. But to anſwer this, no doubt, whilſt we are in this Life, ſubject to thoſe Decays and Infirmities which require a Supply of the things of this World for our Support, we muſt be allowed ſo much of them as is neceſſary for

for our Repleniſhment; and conſequently, ſo much time as is convenient for the Obtainment of them: Yet after all, this World certainly is not the Chriſtian's Buſineſs, nor our time in it ſo much our own, that we may imploy it upon the World as we pleaſe: No, every Day of our Lives is ſo much God's, that in no part of any Day, we may forget him; but then in ſome part of every Day, we muſt needs forget all things beſides him: The neceſſary Occaſions of the World we may give Room to, but then we muſt remember withal, that we ought not to make more Neceſſaries than God has appointed: For Inſtance, we muſt not ſhorten the Hours of our Devotion, to gain Time to ſpend upon our Luſts; or to ſecure to our ſelves Opportunities, wherein to enrich our Stores with Superfluities; whatever we may think of it, whilſt we are in our eager purſuits after this World, we ſhall all certainly find at the laſt, that God will never accept of ſuch an Account of our time from us, as this, ſpent upon my Pleaſures, upon the occaſions of

my Ambition, in the proſecution of my exceſſive Gettings, Ten, Twenty, perhaps Thirty Years: theſe (God knows) are too often the indiſpenſible Occaſions which prevent us in our Holy Duties: They are theſe Exceſſes in our Labours, theſe ſuperfluous engagements of our Pride (whereof we ought all ſeriouſly to *Repent*) which chiefly hinder us, in the buſineſs of our *Repentance*. Let us conſider, That every Day, nay, every Moment, conſumes ſomewhat of the Thread of Life; and that of all Buſineſs, and Employments, none is more requiſite, than our making Peace with God; of all Neceſſaries, this one thing is moſt neceſſary in us Chriſtians, to mortifie our Affections which are upon the Earth, to cleanſe our Hands, and puriſie our double Minds; to lay up Stores in Heaven, and be every Day in the Works of Faith, Charity, and Obedience; ſecuring and improving our Intereſt in the Kingdom of the Father, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; the Sum and Subſtance of whoſe Goſpel is this, If we do now, whilſt he gives us time for it, turn

turn unto God in a true Faith, and with a hearty *Repentance*, we ſhall at his Coming, be made Partakers of his Eternal Kingdom, where there ſhall be no time to terminate our Enjoyments of him. To which Bleſs'd State, vouchſafe, O bleſſed Father, to bring us all, through the Merits of Chriſt Jeſus thy Son, to whom with thee, and the Holy Ghoſt, be all Honour and Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

FINIS.

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